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ABSTRACT

This practicum project was designed to formulate and initiate a plan of action to promote and evaluate a community college Child Care Credential (CCC) training program. A pre-implementation survey indicated that few child care professionals in the community knew of the program or its characteristics. A media campaign was designed to promote the program and recruit child care professionals to it. It consisted of implemented. The campaign consisted of radio and television public service announcements, newspaper advertisements, presentations at local professional meetings, and a mass mailing to all child care centers and professionals in the community. The CCC training program developed by the state Division of Child Development was then presented to 100 participants over an 11-week period. Analysis of entrance and exit surveys to program participants found that the CCC training program was effective and had practical value for child care professionals. Contains 22 references. (MDM)

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A Plan of Action for Recruitment and Evaluation of the Child Care Credential Training Program for Child Care Professionals

by

Deborah W. Whaley

Cluster 54

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A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

1994

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

This practicum took place as described.

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Address

July 11, 1994

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This practicum report was submitted by Deborah W. Whaley under the direction of the advisor listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Dootor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

Approved:

22 August 1994

Date of Final Approval of Report

Roberta Wong Bouverat

Roberta Wong Bouverat, Ph.D., Advisor

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Words alone cannot express the gratitude of this writer for a great number of wonderful, supportive people. An overwhelming thank you goes first to my family. Jim, Melissa, and Joshua have gone without Mom and wife for the duration of this practicum. They have gotten their own meals, left the house to give me peace and quiet, and put up with my determination to complete this practicum.

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ABSTRACT

A Plan of Action for Recruitment and Evaluation of the Child Care Credential Training Program for Child Care Professionals. Whaley, Deborah W., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova Southeastern University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Child Development/Child Care/Professional Development/Training/Community Colleges/Program Development/Early Childhood Education

This practicum was designed to formulate and initiate a plan of action to promote, recruit, and establish an instrument to evaluate the effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program. A pre-implementation survey indicated that basic knowledge and availability of the training program was virtually unknown to child care professionals.

The writer designed a media campaign to promote and recruit child care professionals for the training program. The media campaign consisted of public service announcements, presentations at local professional organization meetings, newspaper advertisements, articles written by the writer and disbursed by the college, and a flyer mailed to all licensed child care facilities, day care homes, and individual child care professionals. The training program, developed by the state Division of Child Development was presented to 100 participants over an eleven week period.

Analysis of data gathered from entrance and exit evaluation instruments developed by the writer revealed that the Child Care Credential training program was effective and had practical worth for child care professionals. Child Care professionals indicated greater feelings of confidence in their ability to meet the needs of the young children with whom they worked.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of Community

The community in which this practicum took place is the fourth largest metropolitan area in the writer's state. The community has a population of 250,000 residents. It is the home of one of the world's largest military complexes. Forty-four percent of the population is transient due to this military contingent. In addition to the military complex, the community workforce is comprised of industry and agriculture. Even as the community looks toward the future growth of industry and strengthens the military connections already established, a powerful link still exists between the community and the initial agrarian roots that were established 254 years ago. This blue collar community has a median annual income of $15,000.

Residents interested in obtaining a post-secondary education can choose to attend several institutions located in the community. These institutions consist of a state university, a private college, and a state supported

technical community college.

The local technical community college, established in 1961, is the largest community college in a 58 state college system. The community college has experienced expansion in several areas. The number of programs offered has increased from 3 to 63. Student enrollment has risen from 50 students in 1961 to over 10,000 full time students in 1994. There are an additional 30,000 part time students enrolled. The physical plant has grown from a building of 38,000 square feet to a 111.6 acre campus with buildings totaling over 400,000 square feet. Funds have been allocated for two additional buildings to begin construction in 1994. The original faculty and staff consisted of nine people. The college now has 193 full time faculty, 367 adjunct faculty and an additional 328 support staff. The operating budget for the college is 30 million dollars.

The college offers affordable educational opportunities to residents. In-state residents, military personnel and dependents can attend classes for $13.25 per quarter hour.

Writer's Work Setting and Role

Although the community is extremely fortunate to have a variety of institutions for higher learning within such close proximity, the options for child care services professionals are severely limited.

Training programs for child care services professionals are only available at the community college. The local four year institutions do not provide training programs for individuals who wish to work with children in child care settings.

The Department of Child Development Services, Continuing Education Division has merged with the Department of Early Childhood Education, General Services Division at the local community college to provide training for child care services professionals. The writer is the Coordinator of the Department of Child Development Services and functions as a liaison between the college and the child care services profession. The Department of Child Development Services consists of a full time coordinator and 15 adjunct faculty members. As coordinator of Child Development Services, the writer is responsible for planning and developing training programs as well as preservice and inservice courses. The writer serves in the capacity of facilitator for some of the training programs, monitors the training needs of child care services professionals in the community and maintains contact with agencies responsible for regulations and legislative mandates.

The writer has attained trainer qualification from the state Division of Child Development to introduce a new voluntary training program for child care professionals.

This program, the Child Care Credential, consists of 66 contact hours in a classroom setting as well as observation in a child care facility. The training program has been developed for entry-level child care services professionals. The child care services professional who meets all requirements will obtain a state certificate of completion and six hours of college credit.

CHAPTER II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The population growth within the community and the increasing number of single parent households and/or working mothers have impacted local child care facilities. There were 74 licensed facilities in 1983. The child care services community has tried to meet the demand for more child care facilities. In the 11 year period from 1983 to 1994 an additional 192 child care centers and home day cares were licensed.

Child care facilities were not regulated until 1971. In 1971, the state created the Division of Child Development to regulate child care facilities. Training was not required of caregivers until 1983. In 1983, the Division of Child Development established minimum requirements for preservice and annual inservice training.

The state Division of Child Development created a Child Care Credential training program that will be mandated as a minimum preservice requirement in 1997. The state

Division of Child Development placed the responsibility of implementation of the standardized Child Care Credential training program on the state community college system. There was not an established method in place to promote, recruit for and evaluate the Child Care Credential training program.

Problem Documentation

The community college had not developed a method to promote, recruit or evaluate the Child Care Credential training program. The Division of Child Development mailed a promotional flyer to all licensed child care facilities and family home day cares in August, 1992. This was one month before beginning the first session of the training program. The promotional flyer presented information about the training program in a vague fashion that provided few answers and raised a multitude of questions. The flyer was the only source of active advertisement utilized to promote the Child Care Credential training program. There were no additional attempts on the part of the state Division of Child Development to market the training program.

The writer conducted a telephone poll of 150 child care professionals selected through random sampling of the 2500 known child care professionals locally. Ninety-three percent of the sample (139 out of the 150 child care professionals surveyed) indicated no knowledge of

the new training program offered by the state Division of Child Development. The 139 individuals indicated no knowledge of scholarship availability, monetary incentives, or location and dates of training. The 11 individuals who were aware of the program indicated only a limited knowledge. One individual out of the 11 indicated awareness that scholarships were available. The remaining 10 individuals had no knowledge other than the fact the state Division of Child Development was going to offer the training program. All of the 11 individuals stated that there existed a lack of information as to dates and places training would be available. Table 1 reports the results of the telephone polling.

Table 1

Telephone Survey of Knowledge of Child Care Credential Training Program

(n = 150)

Characteristic	Knowledge	No Knowledge
Existence of training program	7% (11)	93% (139)
Scholarship availability	0.5% (1)	99.5% (149)
Monetary incentive	0% (0)	100% (150)
Dates and location of training	0% (0)	100% (150)

Although there are 2500 local child care professionals, there have been only 100 graduates of the Child Care Credential training program since the inception of the program in September, 1992. This information was obtained from the office of the registrar at the local community college responsible for the implementation of the training program. These numbers indicated that only 4% of the local child care professionals had completed the state training program.

The effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program could not be evaluated. There were no instruments to evaluate the effectiveness and practical worth of this program.

Causative Analysis

The problem consisted of two factors. The first factor was two-fold. It was comprised of program promotion and recruitment. The second factor was evaluation of the program.

After mailing out the single promotional flyer, the state Division of Child Development assigned future promotion and recruitment of the Child Care Credential training program to the community college. No one in the community college had assumed the responsibility for promotion and recruitment of the training program.

The state Division of Child Development incorporated

learning reviews at the conclusion of each of the six units that comprised the Child Care Credential training program. There was no evaluation instrument that distinguished the effectiveness and practical worth of the training provided for the Child Care Credential program from prior knowledge held by the program participants by the state Division of Child Development.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The child care industry has been dramatically impacted by single parent families and the increasing number of women with young children entering the workforce. The demand for trained professionals will continue to escalate as staff shortages occur due to the increasing number of children placed in child care by parents. Although the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has established training levels and career ladders for the professional development of chid care teachers, these training levels and career ladders have not been utilized as criteria in a consistent manner (Phillips, 1991). Specific and specialized training in child development and child care are needed to provide the optimum level of program quality (Copple, 1991; Koralek, Colker, & Dodge, 1993; Phillips, 1991). Bredekamp (1992) believes that "...the nation needs more and better specialized early childhood preparation programs....Unarticulated, disconnected training programs at

various levels present more walls than steps to individual professional development." (p 54). Quality and effectiveness of training impact the performance quality of child care professionals (Arnett, 1989; Greenman, 1987; Lombardi, 1989; Russell, 1993; Shirah, Hewitt, & McNair, 1993). Quinn (1990) states that "Staff development can and should be a guided search for new discoveries and learning with which presenters and participants alike grow personally and professionally." (p. 18). Success of even the most comprehensive, well developed training programs will be thwarted if relatively few individuals are aware of availability and pertinent information concerning these programs. Russell (1993) specifically addresses and supports the necessity for program promotion and funding. The Child Development Associate (CDA) is an example of a training program for child care professionals where development has been handicapped by the limited promotion that has been instituted in the child care community (Lombardi, 1989). The NAEYC position statement on guidelines for compensation of Early Childhood professionals indicates "Even when individuals understand the importance of professional development for improving the quality of early childhood services, access to continuing education is often denied due to a lack of resources. The current crisis in recruiting and retaining qualified staff has resulted in

many programs employing individuals who are under qualified for their roles and responsibilities." (p. 32).

The lack of continuity in regulatory guidelines has complicated training endeavors to provide the optimum level of program quality (Copple, 1991; Lombardi, 1989; Pfleeger, 1991; Russell, 1993). Training preparation for child care professionals does not seem to have a factor of cohesiveness when viewed from a state by state or training institution by training institution approach (Copple, 1991; National Association of State Boards of Education, 1988; Phillips, 1991). Professional development training cannot be approached in a hit and miss fashion, but should be a comprehensive sequential process of skills (Copple, 1991; Phillips, 1991; Smith & Newman, 1993). Greenman (1987) addresses the existence of a potential problem concerning how evaluation procedures of programs are conducted. The information gathered from the evaluation may be reliable while at the same time not validate the effectiveness of program goals. Stoneall (1991) states that "Needs assessment and evaluation of training work hand-in-hand as parts of a continuous feedback cycle to help training planners determine content." (p. 33). Arnett (1989) states "Further research should be conducted on training programs for caregivers, including pre-training and post-training evaluations." (p. 551).

CHAPTER III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goals and Expectations

The goal of the writer was to formulate and initiate a plan of action to promote, recruit, and establish an instrument to evaluate the effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program.

Expected Outcomes

There were four major outcomes projected as a result of this practicum. Promotion and recruitment of the Child Care Credential training program comprised the first outcome. The writer projected that after implementation, a media campaign would be used to promote program awareness and recruit child care professionals. The media campaign consisted of public service announcements, presentations at local professional organization meetings, newspaper advertisements, articles written and disbursed by the college, and a flyer mailed to all licensed child care facilities, day care homes, and individual child care professionals. A random telephone sampling consisting of 150 child care professionals was conducted by the writer.

Results of the sampling indicated that 139 out of 150 (93%) of those individuals polled had no knowledge of the existence of the Child Care Credential training program. The writer proposed that after implementation, 130 out of 150 (87%) child care professionals chosen in a random telephone sample would indicate an awareness of and a basic knowledge of the training program of the proposal.

The writer proposed that after program implementation, an additional 100 child care professionals would complete the Child Care Credential training program. This would bring the total number to 200 graduates.

The development of an entrance and exit evaluation instrument by the writer comprised the fourth outcome. The writer projected that after program implementation, the effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program would be evaluated through these instruments.

Measurement of Outcomes

A telephone survey form developed by the writer was utilized to ascertain if information about the Child Care Credential training program was being disseminated with greater success to local child care professionals. The short survey was compared to the pre-practicum implementation survey. The survey comparison provided data to the writer concerning the success of the media campaign

utilized to provide information about the training program to child care professionals.

An increase in graduation of students from the Child Care Credential training program after practicum implementation was determined by a comparison of graduation records maintained by the office of the registrar during pre-implementation and post-implementation periods. A second method of verification was a comparison of roll books maintained by the writer during pre-implementation and post-implementation periods.

The final measurement tool for this practicum was developed by the writer to meet the unique assessment needs for the Child Care Credential training program. This measurement tool consisted of two written surveys. The entrance survey, administered during the registration process, provided information regarding prior knowledge the child care professional might have had about topics covered in the training sessions. The survey also indicated how the child care professional became acquainted with the training program, revealed information about educational background, and provided data concerning the type of work settings. A written exit survey was completed by each child care professional at the conclusion of the 66 hour training program. Child care professionals were asked to rate each of the goals and objectives for the six units

covered in the training program. The child care professionals were asked to rate the units for ease of understanding, usefulness of application, and length of time provided for each unit. The survey also asked participants to rate the trainer and indicate the level of satisfaction with the training program. The entrance and exit surveys were compared and differences noted to aid in determination of the effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program.

CHAPTER IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The state Division of Child Development placed the responsibility of implementation of the standardized Child Care Credential training program on the state community college system. There was not an established method in place to promote, recruit and evaluate the Child Care Credential training program.

The increasing need for quality child care programs for young children has influenced the demand for trained professionals knowledgeable in child development (Copple, 1991, Eheart, 1987; Phillips, 1991; Shirah et al., 1993; Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips, 1989). Existing training programs should be refined to provide specific training competencies for child care professionals (Shirah et al., 1993). One of the recommendations made by Whitebook, Howes, & Phillips (1989) in the National Child Care Staffing Study was to "Promote formal education and training opportunities for child care teachers to improve their ability to interact effectively with children and to create developmentally

appropriate environments." (p. 17). The Child Care Credential training program is a systematic, sequential training program developed by the state Division of Child Development. This training program provides a comprehensive overview of the role of the child care professional. Training of child care professionals should be a comprehensive, sequential procession of skills (Copple, 1991; Phillips, 1991; Smith & Newman, 1993).

Essential to successful promotion and recruitment for a training program is a plan of action (Lombardi, 1989; Russell, 1993). Plans of action vary from simple to complex. Funds for implementation range from almost nonexistent to local, state, corporate, and federal money in quantity (Lombardi, 1989; Russell, 1993; Sanders, 1987). Promotion techniques for training programs range from word of mouth to elaborate marketing packages put together by marketing consultants. Russell (1993) utilizes money derived from a variety of funding sources to develop, promote, implement, and evaluate a model training program.

Guidelines have been established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children delineating training levels and career ladders for professional development. These training levels and career ladders are not utilized as criteria for professional development with any consistency (Phillips, 1991). Shubird (1990) states

that "The primary purpose of all training is to improve or change the performance of the trainees." (p. 9). Training programs for child care professionals fluctuate from a single workshop to formats that upon successful completion of training dispense diplomas, certificates, associate degrees, baccalaureates, and advanced level degrees (Bredekamp, 1992; Copple, 1991; Costley, 1991; Eheart, 1987; Phillips, 1991). Vocational programs have been suggested by Shirah et al. (1993) as a method to promote training in child development for the child care professional. Quality standards can be attained by developing a system for training approval (Costley, 1991). Greenman (1987) states that it is not enough to simply evaluate a program. There must be a determination of the purpose and goal of the evaluation procedure.

Several possible solutions evolved as the writer conducted a review of the literature. The support of child care center facilities could have been solicited to promote and recruit child care professionals for the training program. Information about the training program could have been disseminated by guest lectures as well as question and answer sessions at local child care organizational meetings. Collaboration to provide funds for program advertising, trainer certification and tuition assistance could have been pursued with state agencies. This collaboration would

enhance recruitment. The program goals should be identified in order to develop evaluation procedures to determine the effectiveness and practical worth of the training program. All of these possible solutions were viable options that could have been utilized in the writer's work setting. Child care facilities could have been made aware of the Child Care Credential training program through direct mailings, telephone contact and personal visits to promote the program. Permission is easily attained to conduct lectures and hold question and answer sessions at local child care organization meetings because of the affiliation the writer has with the child care community. Collaboration with state agencies was a feasible expectation. It was within the jurisdiction of the writer to identify program goals in a manner that would allow for the development of evaluation procedures to determine the effectiveness of the program. Although all of the possible solutions were viable, it was in the opinion of the writer that time constraints for the practicum implementation process would prohibit several options. Collaboration with state agencies for provision of funds, lectures and question and answer segments at local child care organization meetings for the purpose of recruiting students would not be feasible. These methods would unquestionably become a part of all future promotion and recruitment activities and could be utilized

during current implementation to aid in future offerings of the training program.

Description of Selected Solution

The writer developed and implemented an educational marketing and recruitment plan to expand awareness of the Child Care Credential training program. Child care professionals recruited for the training program received a 66 hour program developed by the state Division of Child Development. The program consisted of an overview of professional ethics, child growth and development, communication, positive discipline practices, health and safety, nutrition, anti-bias and stereotyping. Data collected from written entrance and exit surveys were analyzed to determine the effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program. These steps were implemented to strengthen and support this new statewide systematic and sequential training program for child care professionals.

Report of Action Taken

A four step procedure was taken to ensure the success of the practicum implementation process. The writer proposed to increase awareness of the training program through brochures, flyers, and newspaper advertisements. Articles written by the writer were disbursed by the college news and schedule brochure. Telephone recruitment,

television and radio public service announcements were also used to increase awareness of the program. The target population consisted of licensed child care facilities, day care homes, and individual child care professionals.

Information pertaining to the availability of scholarships was disseminated to potential students as an additional recruitment incentive. Methods that were utilized for dissemination included brochures, articles, flyers, public service announcements, and newspaper advertisements.

A written entrance survey developed by the writer was administered to all child care professionals at the time of registration. A written exit survey developed by the writer was administered to all child care professionals prior to graduation from the program. The entrance and exit surveys were compared and analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness and practical worth of the training program. The 66 hour Child Care Credential training program was implemented by the writer according to state mandate. Participants had the option of attending either morning or evening classes. Training was carried out over a period of 11 weeks. Weekly sessions consisted of two 3 hour sessions. The writer maintained a daily journal to record observations and events throughout the implementation process. The implementation process became activated upon practicum proposal approval

and covered a time period of 12 weeks.

The first week of the implementation process began with a campaign to promote the Child Care Credential training program. Public service announcements written by the writer were aired daily on local radio stations and on the television community access channel. Advertisements promoting the training program appeared daily in the local newspaper. The college mailed articles and a flyer authored by the writer on the Child Care Credential training program. There were 689 pieces of mail distributed in this bulk mailing. There were an additional 52 pieces of mail that were undeliverable due to lack of forwarding address information. All state licensed child care facilities, day care homes, and individual child care professionals received this information. There was an additional group that received information about the Child Care Credential training program. This group consisted of individuals who had specifically telephoned the college to inquire about the availability of training to work in child care. The cost for advertisement and postage was assumed by the Child Development Services Department.

The second week of the implementation process was utilized for registration and orientation of individuals participating in the Child Care Credential training program. Registration took place on Day 1 through Day 4. Day 5 was

also allocated for registration if any of the 100 slots remained unfilled in the training program. All available slots were filled by Day 4. Participants in the training program had the option of choosing a Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday schedule as well as a choice of morning or evening sessions. The writer conducted morning and evening orientation sessions for all registered participants on Day 5.

Each participant was given a written entrance survey to complete during the orientation session. In an attempt to solicit honest responses the survey did not require participants to supply names. Participates were given the requirements mandated by the state for successful completion of the training program during the orientation sessions. A brief overview of the training program was presented by the writer. The writer provided each participant with a schedule of class meeting dates, a time line detailing information covered in each class session as well as written assignments and projects for the 66 hour training program. The writer disseminated information and applications concerning scholarship incentives available to defray the cost of tuition, textbook, and travel for the training program. Students were allowed time to ask questions concerning the training program. Most participants asked questions concerning individual eligibility for scholarship

incentives, future training opportunities, and general information.

Implementation of the state mandated Child Care Credential training program began Week 3. The unit covered in Sessions 1 and 2 for all four groups of participants encompassed the role of the child care professional and professional ethics. Participants were eager and receptive to information disseminated for the first unit. There were four participants that initially were reluctant to participate in the role playing segments. The enthusiasm and encouragement of fellow participants successfully eliminated this problem. The first unit was presented utilizing a variety of teaching techniques such as lecture, small and large group discussions, and role play.

A learning review for Unit 1 developed by the state Division of Child Development was administered to each group of participants at the beginning of Session 1, Week 4. The learning review results were positive and encouraging to the writer and participants. Scores on the learning review ranged from 82 - 100. Scores were assessed letter grades according to the college grading scale (A = 93 - 100; B = 85 - 92; C = 77 - 84; D = 70 - 76; F = below 70). Many participants had indicated feelings of trepidation over the learning review for a variety of reasons. Some participants had been out of school for a number of years or did not

particularly do well on tests while in school. There were several participants for whom English was a second language. The writer allowed English as a second language students the usage of a bilingual dictionary and/or the opportunity to have the test read orally. These were the only two options available to the writer at the time of implementation. The second unit was introduced by the writer in the remaining time allocated for Session 1. The second unit identified major areas of child growth and development, major principles and theorists, and characteristics of children birth through twelve years. Session 1 covered the major areas of child development. The writer facilitated large and small group discussions and activities during the first session.

Principles of development and child development theorists were the focus of Session 2, Week 4. The writer presented basic information and facilitated class discussion. Participants were informed that the information presented in Session 2, Week 4 would be used as a basis to compare and contrast developmental theories and theorists during sessions covering the characteristics of children birth through twelve years. The writer presented a lecture on infant and toddler development in Session 1, Week 5. A group discussion was facilitated by the writer following the lecture. Students also participated in problem solving

activities.

The writer facilitated a discussion of the characteristics of preschool children (2 to 5 years) and school age children (5 to 12 years) in Session 2, Week 5. Participants were required to conduct a behavioral evaluation and assessment using the evaluation instrument provided in the participant textbook. Participant reaction to the observation assignments was both positive and negative. The majority of participants were enthusiastic. Two participants thought the assignment unnecessary.

One student was pregnant and gave birth prematurely. Two students withdrew from the program after excessive absenteeism. The total number of possible graduates from the program dropped to 97.

The writer, as facilitator conducted discussions on activity planning and developmental delays in Session 1, Week 6 of the implementation process. The writer introduced activity planning based on individual and age appropriateness. Group discussion followed by small group activities to prepare and develop activity plans was facilitated by the writer. A discussion was conducted to identify the role and responsibility of the child care professional in regard to developmental delays. This session concluded the information for Unit 2 of the training program. Participants indicated that this was the most

difficult unit of the two units covered thus far in the training program. There was concern expressed by the participants over the amount of information required for Unit 2. The participants felt that sufficient time was not allocated for the information covered. It should be noted that the training program allocated very specific time lines for each of the six units covered. Five three hour sessions were allocated for coverage of the information contained in Unit 2.

A learning review for Unit 2 developed by the state Division of Child Development was administered at the beginning of Session 2, Week 6. Learning review scores ranged from 56 - 100. The third unit of the training program was introduced by the writer in Session 2, Week 6. Participants were asked to take part in an activity designed to express personal self-concept. Participants had lost most of the inhibitions and shyness that characterized initial requests for role playing in the first weeks of the program. The activity was followed by a group discussion, facilitated by the writer, on self-concept. Participants were involved in two additional activities facilitated by the writer. The first activity was designed to increase sensitivity to diversity. The second activity demonstrated how differences in individuals were viewed. Participants were allowed through role play to experience what being

different from other people was like. Participants indicated a new feeling of understanding for the way other individuals feel when treated differently or as an abnormal individual. Group discussions were facilitated by the writer after each activity.

The focus of Session 1, Week 7 was the establishment of a positive, professional relationship with the family and other professionals working with children. The writer facilitated discussions and presented activities that promoted relationships with families. The writer gave a lecture and facilitated a group discussion on child abuse and neglect and the role of the child care professional. This lecture included signals and symptoms of child abuse and neglect. Legal responsibility and liability for child care professionals mandated by the state were also included in the lecture. A discussion, facilitated by the writer, on communication between parents and child care professionals was held. Participants took part in role play activities to reinforce the material covered. Students were required to develop a community resource file of local agencies that provided services to meet the needs of children and families.

The resource file was shared in Session 2, Week 7. The sharing increased the resource list of each participant. The writer facilitated small group activities that

concentrated on communication. A lecture on communication techniques was presented by the writer.

Four participants decided that the program expected too much and withdrew from the training program. All four participants were passing the program at the time of withdrawal. The total number of possible graduates from the program dropped to 94.

The writer began Session 1, Week 8 by facilitating a discussion on reflective feeling and open-ended questions followed by activities to reinforce the material discussed. A learning review for Unit 3 developed by the state Division of Child Development was administered at the beginning of Session 2, Week 8. Learning review scores ranged from 80 - 100. The fourth unit of the training program was introduced by the writer. The writer facilitated a discussion that focused on indoor and outdoor space in the physical environment. Principles of planning the physical environment were discussed. Small group activities on evaluation and design of physical space were facilitated by the writer. The writer presented methods to adapt the environment for children with special needs.

The writer presented developmentally appropriate schedule planning and transition in Session 1, Week 9. Participants engaged in activities designed to reinforce information presented by the writer. Social/emotional

environment was covered by the writer in Session 2, Week 9. A lecture was followed by small group activities. The remainder of the session focused upon the topics of identifying and expressing feelings, active listening, expressive feelings, I-messages, social behavior and adult/child interaction. The writer utilized discussion and small group activities to facilitate learning.

Cognitive/language environment was the focus of Session 1, Week 10 of the implementation process. The writer presented this information in a lecture. Group discussion and activities on language followed the lecture. The writer facilitated a discussion on problem solving, creative thinking, and open-ended questions. Session 1 concluded with a discussion led by the writer on individual learning styles.

A learning review developed by the state Division of Child Development for Unit 4 was administered at the beginning of Session 2, Week 10. Learning review scores ranged from 86 - 100. The writer introduced the fifth unit of the training program. Positive guidance was discussed in small and whole groups. The writer served as facilitator for the discussions. Participants exhibited mixed feelings and opinions regarding this unit of study. Nineteen participants expressed negative attitudes towards utilization of positive guidance. Fifty additional

participants were skeptical about the effectiveness of positive guidance. Twenty-five participants were enthusiastic about positive guidance. The majority of participants were willing to reserve opinion until actual implementation of positive guidance in a group setting was accomplished. Ten of the participants opposed to positive guidance had worked in the child care field for ten or more years.

The writer facilitated activities designed to reinforce positive statements in Session 1, Week 11. The writer conducted a review of active listening followed by small group activities to practice active listening. A lecture was given by the writer on establishing rules. Students participated in an activity designed to give practice in establishing rules.

Session 2, Week 11 began with a discussion led by the writer on common behavior problems. The writer facilitated discussion on the topic of punishment and discipline. Information on natural and logical consequences of behavior was provided by the writer through lecture and involvement of participants in activities. The writer provided participants with information regarding state licensing regulations for discipline. Participants remained virtually the same in opinions as during the discussion on positive guidance from Session 2, Week 10. Four

participants, originally opposed to positive guidance, decided to reserve opinion until after implementation of positive guidance in a group setting. There were an additional eight participants who decided to change from opposition to positive discipline to reservation of opinion. Five participants decided to embrace the concept of positive guidance.

A learning review developed by the state Division of Child Development for Unit 5 was administered by the writer at the beginning of Session 1, Week 12. Participants received passing grades on this learning review with scores ranging from 79 to 100.

The sixth unit of the training program was introduced by the writer in Session 1, Week 12. Information covered in this unit was on providing a safe and healthy environment. The writer facilitated a discussion of health and safety responsibilities in child care. A lecture was given by the writer on nutrition. Participants engaged in activities facilitated by the writer to reinforce material presented on nutrition. Safety hazards in child care was presented by utilization of lecture and discussion methods.

A learning review developed by the state Division of Child Development was administered for Unit 6 in Session 2, Week 12. The learning review concluded the training program. Ninety-four participants completed the training

program and submitted a form requesting to be awarded the Child Care Credential certification by the state Division of Child Development. Participants working in a child care setting also applied for a cash incentive bonus awarded by the state Division of Child Development. Each participant was required to complete a written exit survey. In an attempt to solicit honest responses the survey did not require participants to supply names. The writer compared the entrance and exit surveys to determine the effectiveness and practical worth of the training program. The post-implementation telephone survey was conducted by the writer. The results were compared to the pre-implementation telephone survey by the writer.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The community college was charged by the state Division of Child Development to provide the Child Care Credential training program for child care professionals. The community college had not developed a method to promote, recruit or evaluate the Child Care Credential training program. The goal of the writer was to formulate and initiate a plan of action to promote, recruit, and establish an instrument to evaluate the effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program. The writer developed and implemented a marketing and recruitment plan of action to expand awareness of the Child Care Credential training program. The writer then presented the 66 hour training program to the participating child care professionals. Data collected from written entrance and exit surveys developed by the writer were analyzed to determine the effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program.

The first outcome was the promotion and recruitment of the Child Care Credential training program. A media campaign was utilized to promote program awareness and recruit child care professionals. The most effective media campaign components were articles written and disbursed by the community college, direct mailing of a flyer, newspaper advertisement, and presentations at local professional organization meetings. The public service announcements proved to be the least effective methods of dissemination.

A random telephone sampling of 150 child care professionals was conducted by the writer after implementation of the media campaign. The writer proposed that after implementation, 130 out of 150 (87%) child care professionals chosen would indicate an awareness of and a basic knowledge of the training program. Results of the post-implementation poll indicated that 147 out of 150 (98%) child care professionals chosen indicated an awareness of and a basic knowledge of the training program. The poll also indicated that 145 (97%) out of 150 indicated knowledge of scholarship availability and monetary incentives. An awareness of dates and locations for training opportunity was indicated by 141 (94%) out 150 child care professionals. Table 2 reports the comparison of pre-implementation and post-implementation telephone surveys that were conducted to determine if knowledge of the Child Care Credential Training

program had increased. The comparison of the two surveys indicated that the media campaign to promote and recruit for the Child Care Credential training program was overwhelmingly successful.

Table 2

Effectiveness of Media Campaign to Increase Knowledge of Child Care Credential Training Program

(n = 150)

Characteristic	Pre-Implementation	Post-Implementation	Increase
Existence of training program	7% (11)	98% (147)	91% (136)
Scholarship availability	0.5% (1)	97% (145)	96.5% (144)
Monetary incentive	0% (0)	97% (145)	97% (145)
Dates and location of training	0% (0)	94% (141)	94% (141)

The third outcome proposed by the writer was the successful completion of the Child Care Credential training program by an additional 100 child care professionals. A comparison was made of graduation records maintained by the office of the registrar, roll books maintained by the writer, and applications filed with the state Division of Child Development for Child Care Credential certification. Those records indicated that 94 individuals received Child Care Credential certification. The third outcome proposed by the writer was not accomplished. The total number of

graduates was six individuals short of the projected 100 graduates. The writer deemed that the training program was successful even though the proposed outcome was not realized.

The final outcome identified in the proposal was the development of an entrance and exit evaluation instrument by the writer. The effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program would be evaluated by a comparison of these instruments.

Participants were required to complete the entrance survey during the orientation session. Participants were asked to answer questions covering major components of the six units. The questions asked on the entrance survey were designed to ascertain knowledge participants already possessed regarding major components of the six units. Participants were required to complete the exit survey during the final session held in Week 12. Participants were again asked to answer questions covering major components of the six units to ascertain if the training program had provided increased knowledge.

A component of the exit survey asked participants to rate each of the six units in the training program in terms of understanding, usefulness of application, and length of time provided for each unit. Participants were also asked to rate the overall effectiveness of the training program

and the trainer. Information gathered from the exit survey forms indicated an overwhelming positive response for the effectiveness and practical worth of the material presented by the training program and the effectiveness of the trainer. Table 3 reports the results of these questions.

Table 3

Participant Rating of Child Care Credential Training Program

(n = 94)

Characteristic	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
Unit 1 goals and objectives were realistic	89	2	3
Unit 1 - Adequate time allowed to cover material	86	0	8
Unit 2 goals and objectives were realistic	90	1	3
Unit 2 - Adequate time allowed to cover material	84	3	7
Unit 3 goals and objectives were realistic	88	2	4
Unit 3 - Adequate time allowed to cover material	88	1	5
Unit 4 goals and objectives were realistic	90	1	3
Unit 4 - Adequate time allowed to cover material	87	2	5
Unit 5 goals and objectives were realistic	90	1	3
Unit 5 - Adequate time allowed to cover material	90	1	3
Unit 6 goals and objectives were realistic	89	2	3
Unit 6 - Adequate time allowed to cover material	89	3	2
Overall goals and objectives of training program were realistic	89	2	3
Trainer knowledgeable and well informed	90	2	2
Confidence in ability has increased due to training program	90	1	3

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A comparison of the entrance and exit surveys was made to determine the effectiveness and practical worth of the Child Care Credential training program. The major components of the training program were scrutinized to determine changes that were directly related to the training program. Participants in the training program indicated that all of the ten major areas covered in the six units of the training program were effective and practical. According to the comparison, the Child Care Credential training program was effective. Table 4 reports the number of participants who indicated increased knowledge and felt that the training program was effective and practical. Table 4 also indicates that the greatest increases were achieved in the areas of positive guidance techniques, anti-bias/multi-cultural environment, awareness of local and regional resources, identification of potential disabilities or delay, and health and sanitation.

Table 4

Comparison of Entrance and Exit Surveys to Determine Effectiveness and Practical Worth of Child Care Credential Training Program

(n = 94)

Characteristic	Pre-Training	Post-Training	Increase
Understand role of professional	54	91	37
Understand major areas of child growth and development	47	90	43
Can plan developmentally appropriate activities	38	89	51
Can identify potential delays or disabilities	17	91	74
Importance of child's culture, home, etc.	36	89	53
Recognition of signs and signals of child abuse and neglect	49	89	40
Aware of local and regional resources	21	89	68
Provide anti-bias/ multi-cultural environment	3	87	84
Knowledge of positive guidance techniques	7	90	83
Knowledge of health and sanitation	26	91	65

Note. The numbers represent the number of positive responses out of a possible 94.

Discussion

The goal of the writer was to formulate and initiate a plan of action to promote, recruit, and establish an instrument to evaluate the effectiveness and practical worth

of the Child Care Credential training program. The goal was accomplished. Three of the four major outcomes predicted for the practicum process were extremely successful.

The media campaign to promote program awareness and recruit child care professionals was successful. The use of public service announcements was the least effective method of dissemination. The time slots allocated for the public service announcements were during the hours child care professionals usually were found to be at work. The time allocations were out of the control of the writer. Articles, personal presentations, newspaper advertisements, and direct mailings reached the largest number of individuals. The most effective methods of media presentation were determined from the entrance survey completed by participants during the orientation session.

The effectiveness of the media campaign to promote awareness of and a basic knowledge of the training program was determined after conducting the post-implementation telephone survey. A comparison of pre-implementation and post-implementation telephone surveys further supported the effectiveness of the media campaign.

Records maintained by the office of the registrar, roll books maintained by the writer, and applications filed with the state Division of Child Development for Child Care Credential certification indicated that 94 out of 100

participants completed requirements for the training program. This increased the total number of graduates from the Child Care Credential training program to 194. This was six individuals less than predicted by the writer in the proposal. The writer still considered the training program a success.

Written entrance and exit evaluation instruments were developed by the writer. A comparison of the two instruments showed that the training program was both effective and practical for child care professionals.

Recommendations

The media campaign was very effective. Public service announcements would be more effective if time allocations could be disbursed throughout the day and evening hours to reach a larger audience.

There was a great demand for the training program. Additional training sessions should be set up. The sessions should be offered again in the morning and evening. A weekend training program should be added to the time slots. A one night a week session covering twenty-two weeks could also be added.

The entrance and exit evaluation instruments were confusing to some participants. The respondents became confused with the rating scale. The automatic assumption on the part of some participants was that the highest number

was the best possibl reply and the lowest number was the worst reply. The evaluation instruments could also be simplified. Simplified instructions and less questions would encourage participants to respond to the surveys with greater thought.

Dissemination

The results of this practicum will be shared with the Department Chairperson of Early Childhood Education. This practicum will also be distributed to Early Childhood Education departments within the state's 58 community college system. The state Division of Child Development will receive a copy of the practicum.

The writer, using the information from the practicum process, prepared a grant application to the state Partnership for Children to promote and recruit additional participants for the Child Care Credential training program. The grant will provide monetary incentives to participants who graduate from the training program. Child Care centers and homes will receive compensation for work release for participants to attend class. Child Care centers and homes will receive additional funds when three or more employees graduate from the training program. The grant was awarded for a total amount of $111,160.00.

The writer plans to submit a proposal to present the practicum to the state and national NAEYC (National

Association for the Education of Young Children) annual meetings. The writer also intends to submit the practicum to the publication Young Children.

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